

Sketch

Volume 10, Number 1

1943

Article 14

To Jane

Charlene Fredricksen*

*Iowa State College

Copyright ©1943 by the authors. *Sketch* is produced by The Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress).
<http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/sketch>

To Jane

Charlene Fredricksen

Abstract

When you were three you found it hard To climb a stair, But trustingly you struggled up...

and callouses. We have stood together reverent before the surprises in grain revealed in newly carved wood. What need have we for the feeble inadequacies of speech? Old man in country cloth, chief robe, and American hat, you of the sensitive hands, and shining eyes, and booming laugh, you are a vibrant chord in the new song I am slowly learning in this vast, strange land!

* * * *

I am lying on an indigo-dyed country cloth under a musaenga tree looking up into the green umbrellas made by each clump of leaves. Morning sun has cut through the bluish mist that screened the sacred Gbebie Mountains and is filtering through the forest. I close my eyes against the light and the caress of the sun on my lids is warm, throbbing, red, and gold, and beautiful, singing through the long length of my body, and now no longer red, but only golden, golden and intoxicating, golden like Catawba wine, golden like the sun through old amber bottles on a glass shelf, golden like a winter patch of sunlight on the living room floor, and warm—warm and intimate, and secure, like the red plaid shawl.

To Jane

Charlene Fredricksen

When you were three you found it hard
To climb a stair,
But trustingly you struggled up.
My hand was there.

When you were ten your puppy died.
I still can see
The heavy unshed tears in eyes
That looked to me.

And now at seventeen you know
I'll understand
When you reveal your heart to me.
Here is my hand.